

SITUATION REPORT NO. 1
INCIDENT NO. 2006-020
DATE: April 13, 2006 Time: 4:30 p.m.

TO: Governor John Hoeven
State Capitol
Bismarck ND 58505

1. **NATURE OF DISASTER:** **Fires** – This spring, the State Operations Center (SOC) has been receiving fire reports throughout the western and central portions of North Dakota.
2. **DEATHS AND INJURIES:** No deaths or injuries have been reported.
3. **DAMAGES:** On April 13, the National Weather Service (NWS) in Bismarck issued a Red Flag Warning for the western part of the state, which is in effect until 7:00 p.m.

The State Fire Marshal and NWS meteorologists indicate North Dakota is the midst of a typical spring fire season given the recent snowmelt. While green-up is taking place, dry vegetation can readily catch fire and spread beyond the control of an individual's activities if proper precautions are not taken. Meteorologists reported rain, forecasted for this weekend, will likely alleviate conditions. An extended forecast calls for temperatures to be slightly below normal for April, May and June.

Burleigh County

On April 10, after one and one-half hours of burning, a fire involving smoldering trees near Rice Lake was extinguished.

A controlled burn on April 9 flared up, causing damage to a yard with a garage/shop in the immediate vicinity. Later that day, a grass fire raged for one hour along 149th Avenue NW.

On April 8, the Sterling Rural Fire Department responded to a 1,000-acre grass fire. Additionally, a fire in a tree grove along N.D. Highway 1804 near Eagles Park burned for approximately one hour, and a small brush fire was reported along I-94 near mile marker 157.

Kidder County

An April 6 fire burned approximately 30 acres of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and slough grass west of Robinson. With winds out of the northeast at 35 to 40 miles per hour (mph), the fire jumped N.D. Highway 36 and proceeded in a southwesterly direction. Local farmers assisted with fire efforts by utilizing tractors and diggers. Approximately 40 firefighters responded.

Logan County

An electrical spark caused the destruction of a barn, 700 acres of grassland and an abandoned farm site northwest of Lehr on April 7. Three fire jurisdictions responded.

McIntosh County

On March 30, a fire northwest of Wishek burned 60 acres of grass. The possible cause of fire may be a spark from the county road grader doing maintenance work on a nearby road.

McLean County

On April 4, a two-acre fire destroyed 12 trees five miles west of Washburn; the cause of the fire is unknown.

Mercer County

On April 5, county officials reported a large grassland fire that was burning beyond control. Units from five area fire departments/districts responded along with the N.D. Forest Service, National Park Service and the U.S. Forest Service. Before being extinguished, the fire had consumed 1,800 acres.

Oliver County

On April 5, approximately 500 acres were destroyed by fire ignited by the catalytic converter of a vehicle driving through the field.

Williams County

On April 7, Williston 911 reported a 100-acre grass fire north of Appam (N.D. Highway 50 and U.S. Highway 85). Alamo, Black Tail and Grenora Fire Departments were dispatched.

On April 6, Williston 911 dispatched the Alamo Fire Department (Black Tail Station and Alamo Station) to a 50-acre grass fire located north of the Black Tail Dam. The fire was believed to have originated from 25-30 mph winds blowing hot ambers from a fire pit that had been burning the day before.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: Local and county fire departments, county sheriff's offices, public works crews, administrative staff, parks staff and local Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) are monitoring conditions.

STATE: Representatives from the Office of the Governor, N.D. Forest Service, N.D. Department of Emergency Services, N.D. State Fire Marshal's Office, N.D.

Highway Patrol, N.D. Forest Service, N.D. Department of Transportation and N.D. National Guard are monitoring the situation and providing assistance, as needed.

FEDERAL: The National Weather Service (NWS) is monitoring weather conditions. The National Park Service and the U.S. Forest Service are providing technical assistance.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: Farmers and ranchers are providing equipment and assistance to local fire departments.
6. MAJOR ACTIONS: Bans on open burning have been issued during the past week by the following counties: Burleigh, Emmons, Kidder, Logan, McLean, Mercer, Morton, Oliver, Renville, Sheridan and Ward. The 2005 Legislature gave local government the authority to issue bans on open burning.

On April 5, the Mercer County Commission declared a fire emergency.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: No assistance is requested at this time.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No outside help, beyond mutual aid, has been reported.
9. OTHER INFORMATION: The Rangeland Fire Index can be obtained on the internet at the N.D. Department of Emergency Services web site at www.nd.gov/des/info/firedanger.html or the National Weather Service website www.crh.noaa.gov/bis/fire.php.

The N.D. Division of Homeland Security's Situation Reports are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is <http://www.state.nd.us/des>.

Greg Wilz, Director
N.D. Division of Homeland Security